



Organizational well-being in prison

Giovanni Suriano¹, Elisa Suriano¹, Simona Guzzi²

¹ Department of Justice, Italy

¹ Università Suor Orsola Benincasa, Italy

The project deals with the issue of well-being in the penitentiary organizations and therefore the dynamics concerning relations between civil and prison professionals as well as between professionals and inmates. The approach that the partnership intends to adopt, in order to promote initiatives to support the improvement of intra-prison conditions, consists in the realization of working meetings. These allow the partners to start transferring information – such as exchanging and sharing experiences – acquired through previous experiences (projects, academic works and so on) based on the following topics: psychophysical health of professionals and inmates; training the professionals and inmates; communication between professionals and inmates; planning the space, the time in order to have the best use of them. The target of the project is aimed at: internal prison professionals, able to get through the exchange of best practices, the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills about the above

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topics; other human resources of training organizations already involved in issues concerning well-being in public administrations and, where possible, in prisons. In so doing, it is possible to share experiences and skills within the whole partnership.

1 Rationale

The main issue of this project is the organized well-being in penitentiaries. There are several organizations that show a growing interest in this theme: public administrations, in particular prisons and training institutions. The latter are interested in establishing collaborative processes with prisons, starting from the perspective of improving the living conditions of prisoners in the same structures, as well as, to institutional players, broadly considered, paying attention to issues pertaining to the process of rehabilitation of inmates and the subsequent reintegration into society.

The prison well-being must be concerned as the result of a set of activities, the promotion and protection of environmental conditions inside prisons, in order to guarantee the adequate performance of activities of internal people and, especially, of prisoners.

These activities aim at strengthening:

the motivation, self-esteem and team spirit of the inmates and of professionals who work with them, promoting the implementation of an effective, constant, complete interpersonal communication. It is necessary to put these initiatives within an overall and systematic 'project for the well-being' because this topic cannot and should not exclusively concern the improvement of prison conditions, but rather, aim at making sustainable the life after their release, through effective socialization and placement activities. The structures interested in the topic will be able to allow, first to professionals and then to inmates to face successfully the intra-prison life, creating adequate conditions for the social reintegration in order to reduce the phenomenon of re-offending.

Set the general framework of the project, the working team, having different skills, although closely interdependent, aims at pursuing initiatives for learning mobility between the partner Countries, involving the staff employed in the penitentiaries in order to share all useful skills to ensure, within their own structures, the creation and maintenance of the constituent conditions of well-being.

For this reason, the proposed project is part of a broader survey of initiatives at international, national and local levels designed to provide adults and future trainers with meetings in order to improve their knowledge and skills.

In fact, the choice to recur to the Grundtvig project to promote the initiative is due to the opportunity presented by the involvement and cooperation of

international partners in the development and implementation of a complex project idea that, for its purpose, requires the joint intervention of key players with specific competencies to be integrated.

The joint action promoted by the international partners involved is strengthened by the possession of heterogeneous knowledge and skills from the partners themselves, because of their past experiences coming from the initiation of previous training courses and meetings for professionals and inmates.

Given the specific characteristics of the prison environment the challenge to be faced is stimulating for the partners. In this regard, it is possible to underline that the prison training takes place in a context so characterized:

a) From a structural point of view:

- Limitation of space;
- Limits to the moments of confrontation with the outside world and the development of interpersonal relationships;
- Presence of rigid communication protocols between prisoners and trainers;
- Presence of strict protocols on the use of ICT.

b) In terms of method:

- limited availability to the creation of groups that can interact and work together;
- lack of openness to the participation in events and recreational activities that can stimulate and motivate the inmate;
- Absence of rewarding mechanisms that tend to increase self-esteem;
- Strong heterogeneity of the knowledge possessed by the inmates;
- Scarce skills by trainers and prison professionals about potentiality, limitations and issues related to the use of ICT;
- Lack of standard protocols for the insurance of adequate levels of quality and effectiveness of training in the penitentiary;
- Difficulties in integrating pedagogical and technical procedures in computer training and e-learning. Thanks to these first exchange and sharing activities all the partners will be able to prompt, by adequate dissemination programmers, other penitentiary organizations to adopt procedures for the implementation of better living conditions.

2 Project objectives and strategy

The main goal of this project is to create:

- As the first, a best practices network of exchange among the partners, about the expertise possessed by them in terms of organizational well-being, in relation to previous experience and/or initiatives to promote

the improvement inside the prisons of living conditions of prisoners and operators that assist them during the expiation period;

- then, a Europe network composed of prison facilities interested in the issues addressed as well as training organizations and institutions, interested to sharing and training initiatives related the well-being intra-organizational prison. Among the priorities that the project is set for the implementation of policies to support change and innovation in public administrations, it is to create specific conditions that could affect improvement of internal social, interpersonal relationships and, in general on organizational culture.

The main theme around which revolve the individual mobility activities that involve the partnership will be to “well-being” inside the prison. In particular, the specific issue will be declined, during the scheduled meetings, in micro issues proposed by the different partners according to the specific skills acquired during the project activities:

- psychophysical health of professionals and inmates;
- training the professionals and inmates;
- communication between professionals and inmates;
- planning the space, the time in order to have the best use of them.

The areas identified will enable the partnership to discuss about main issues shared by P.A. operators (civil and worker in prison) who works in prison.

Indeed, proponents of the well-being, with particular reference to the actors who work in prison facilities recognizes in their efforts aimed to promote the improvement of the environment emotional in which you work, in creating an organizational climate that fosters creativity and the learning, the pleasure to work as well as the safety of the workplace, the conditions necessary for the development and efficiency of government.

The approach used for the concrete development of the project will consist of meetings where the partnership will start trading, transfer and sharing of expertise - best practices - which, in the final phase of the project, will be transferred during dissemination and exploitation time, even to those not involved in the partnership.

3 European added value

The European added value of the project concerns the implementation of initiatives for the exchange and sharing of best practices among partners with reference to the intra-organizational well-being in prison. In fact, by this project it will be possible to address best practices to:

1. the prisons across Europe;
2. the training organizations, interested in starting with the prisons collaborative activities;
3. all the key institutional players, committed and responsible about national and international justice.

Furthermore, each workshop aims at suggesting tips and guidelines in order to promote the well-being in the whole prison organization:

- to support the improvement of the environmental conditions both for the professionals and for the inmates;
- to provide the institutional key players with useful tools for public choice policies finalized both to reduce the phenomenon of re-offending and to facilitate the social reintegration and placement of prisoners.

It is, therefore, indisputable that the adoption of a shared approach between partners located in different EU Countries, all custodians of knowledge and, where possible, of experiences on the initiation of training programs in prisons, represents the coherent choice with the aim to be pursued, increasing the chances of success and sustainability and transferability.

4 Impact

The project effectiveness can be evaluated through two levels.

Firstly, it must be considered the capacity to produce, disseminate and use the practices emerging from each thematic workshop referred to a specific issue. In fact, the partners will share knowledge about:

- the improvement of the psychophysical health of professionals and inmates in prison;
- the training of the professionals and inmates, above all with regard to the new technologies;
- the communication techniques to be used in professional-inmate relationships;
- the planning of space and time, in order to create recreational and educational initiatives aimed at prisoners.

In fact, thanks to the attending of these workshops, promoted by each partner in favor of others, each participant could acquire experiences, technicalities and ideas in order to increase the knowledge about well-being in prison. In addition, as written above, the workshops represent a good opportunity to provide the European and National Institutions with good suggestions aiming at standardize the policies across Europe about the implementation of well-being

in prison organizations.

Secondly, the project will positively impact over the organizational processes of prison participating to the activities.

The added value produced by the project will undoubtedly lie in the network of relationships created among proponents actors, interested in institutions and recipients of the project brought to life and permanently working through, first, the establishment and implementation of the community platform and, then, with the increase of the activities for discussion and reflection which, during the project and after the closing of the same, will be animated within the same platform.

Moreover, in order to support the importance of the project idea and the value that the same could generate at European level, it must be added that, the actions of dissemination and improvement/sustainability.

5 Evaluation

The valuation process will concern the capacity to reach finalities and objectives and it will take place both throughout the lifetime of the project and after its end. In particular, the monitoring and evaluation actions will work in a:

- preventive way, directing the actions implied to the different work packages;
- contextual way, that is related to the development of the on-going actions in order to detect any gaps between the objectives and partial achieved results and, therefore, re-address in a flexible way the action to be taken;
- definitive way, in order to reach an evaluation of the achieved results and, therefore, the value-added deriving from each mid-step-activity respect to its output

Once defined the project objectives and planned the activities to be carried out, indicating the times, cost and quality of outputs, the adopted valuation method will be based on:

1. a survey process aiming at assessing the impact of the project on target (persons taking part in partnership activities, both local activities and/or mobility);
2. reporting activities aiming at evaluating the knowledge acquired from the participation to the workshops;
3. reviewing meetings during the working meetings and through the use of the community platform

The evaluation process will run also after the end of the project, in order

to assess the impact of the results both at a National and at an European level, referring to the actions implemented

The activities to be carried out in the planning phase will be:

planning of a monitoring and self-assessment model and, as well as, of the implementation techniques and tools in order to manage the operational activities, in progress assessment and in the final evaluation; administration of the realized monitoring and assessment tools, data collection and analysis of the indicators to all partners involved in the planning stages; coordination of discussion moments and revision through the platform, before and during the planned workshops for each phase;

preparation of semestral reports describing the progress state of the work and consider the elaboration of the data deriving from the administration of the monitoring tools; drafting of final report, summary of the activities, any correctives brought after the gap analysis; drafting of annual reports for the period of two years after the end of the project.

The goal of the final evaluation will be also to assess the quality of the partnership and the strengths and weaknesses of the work.

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